

King had brought their troops as far as Auerstadt, beyond which they hoped to cross the Saale and make a stand on its right bank to the eastward. They had thirty-five thousand men, excluding the reserve of eighteen thousand. Bernadotte, according to Napoleon's orders, was marching from Gera to Dornburg in order to get in the rear of the deserted Prussian line; but he had not driven his troops, and was still in communication with Davout. Davout had received later orders, based upon Napoleon's conviction that Hohen-lohe's was the main Prussian army, to turn in farther south for the same purpose, and march with his division of thirty-three thousand to Apolda. There was a sentence to the effect that if Bernadotte were near by, they could march together; but the Emperor hoped that the latter had already reached his station at Dornburg. Bernadotte was accordingly informed; but recalling the Emperor's dissatisfaction with him the previous year for his inactivity, he did not feel justified in disregarding the letter and obeying the spirit of his orders. Keeping the line of march formally prescribed, he was not only himself absent from both the battles of the fourteenth, but exposed Davout's single corps to destruction by the Prussian main army, numbering, with the reserve, fifty-three thousand.

Napoleon claimed to have sent an order during the night with directions for Bernadotte to reinforce Davout. This was a double-meaning statement intended to place the blame for Davout's exposure on Bernadotte's slow movements. Bernadotte denied having received any message, and the consequence was an increased bitterness between him and Napoleon, destined to grow still stronger, and finally to become of historic importance. Davout was crossing the river Saale about six o'clock in the morning of the fourteenth, and was well over